DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 103 034 JC 750 176

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| AUTHOR | Chalick, Conrad; And Others |
| TITLE | A Study to Determine the Participation of Evening and Part-Time Students in the College Governance System. |
| PUB DATE | Dec 74 |
| NOTE | 24p.; Practicum presented to Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Education degree |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE |
| DESCRIPTORS | Day Students; *Evening Students; *Governance; *Junior Colleges; *Part Time Students; Student College Relationship; *Student Government; Student Leadership; Student Organizations; Student Participation; Student Rights |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Delaware County Community College; New Jersey; Pennsylvania |

ABSTRACT

In order to suggest a method of including evening and part-time students in the governance system of Delaware County Community College, the author sent a questionnaire to the Dean of Students or related official at 32 community colleges in Pannsylvania and New Jersey to determine the involvement of such students at other institutions. Twenty-two institutions (69 percent) responded. In only 17 institutions were part-time students allowed to vote for student government officers. In 11 institutions evening students could not vote; at two schools evening students could vote only if they were full-time. At 13 institutions only full-time or day students could hold student government office; 12 schools reported that anyone with a cumulative average of "C" or better could hold such an office. No institution reported that students could sit as voting members on institutional committees. At 13 institutions students were appointed to institutional committees, rather than elected; usually they were appointed by the student government association or its president. Only four schools reported separate student organizations for evening students. Relevant literature is reviewed, and recommendations are made. (DC)

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ED103034

# A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE PARTICIPATION OF EVENING AND PART-TIME STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

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JC 750 176

A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

NOVA UNIVERSITY

December 19, 1974

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## INTRODUCTION

A constant concern of college administrators has been student interest and participation in college governance. Because of events in the 1960's on college campuses, most faculty and institutional committees now recognize the need for student membership in governance process. It is necessary to determine if the system provides for input from all the student constituencies of the present day. An obvious group overlooked in college governance is the evening and part-time college student. More than one-third of the students at Delaware County Community College are evening and part-time. No provision is made by either student government or the institution for their input or participation in the governance system. In order to hold any Student Government Association office or serve on an institutional committee, one must be a full-time student. Since less than half of the student body is full-time, half the students cannot serve or have a direct vote in the institutional governance system. This represents "taxation without representation." It is recognized that the full-time day students carry the bulk of the financial burden and have the time to participate. We need to know about the needs of the other population

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since little attempt has been made to solicit their involvement.

Is Delaware County Community College unique in it's requirements for holding office? This study attempts to determine if this is the case or if this situation is characteristic of other institutions.

Each year the part-time enrollment and the evening enrollment at Delaware County Community College has increased in relation to the full-time day enrollment. It is not clear why this has happened and seems imperative for the institution to find out about this student population and get them involved in giving input into their educational system.

The Dean of Students at Delaware County Community College is aware of this study. He is most anxious to see the results.

Review of the literature

The turbulent climate of the educational environment of the last decade produced the piercing demand for student participation in campus governance. Students made their general dissatisfaction evident, however their direction of need was not clearly defined. They showed unrest and frustration and expressed the need for a voice in government but not for the power of governing. Students did not want to run the univer-

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sity. They wanted to help (Brecher, p. 234). The dramatic change that occurred at this point was the recognition of students as legitimate participants in governance. This change has implication for reform in the structure of policy process. Students need to be selected in a truly representative fashion. They need the legitimacy given by handling real power, having their decisions honored, using available monies, and having public recognition (Shaffer, p. 344). In order for students to participate fairly they must know the formal and informal system, be recognized and compensated for their transient nature, be given the best information on decisions, know facilities and staff, and be treated without condescention (Shaffer, p. 346). Such are the trend of statements on student participation by students involved in the period of change.

Administration or continuing arrangement for the conduct of affairs by organization is always the same kind of process (Kerr, p. 38). There is daily preparation for the decision-making process. Decisions are made and the circle continues. Clark Kerr believes that the climatic period of turmoil we have experienced sets up a shifting position in this process. He sights several areas of change and mentions that it is his opinion that students will reflect greater remedial

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needs, cultural differences and desire for total development. (Kerr, p. 45). A new administrative process should result considering conflict and change by proper assessment and becoming responsive to needs. (Kerr, p. 45). This process should be understood by student participants in both formal and informal structure. If students wish to have impact they must understand power, where it lies and how it works. (Bowles, p. 257).

The community college must consider the unique needs of its students for their participation in governance and for appropriate goal setting. The junior or community college must offer developmental opportunities beyond counseling. (O'Brian, p. 102).

The student that the two-year college works with has different needs and characteristics than his four-year contemporary. He is more likely to commute from his former social environment to school. He is generally less academically able and often will withdraw or be expelled. Often he is from a lower socio-economic background. He works while he is a student. Interest in school activities is low. (George and George, p. 155). To include this student we must assess his needs and interests and innovate in the areas of participation and governance. (George and

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George, p. 158). We should recognize the need for a well conceived policy of participation. Students should be placed in appropriate decision positions. Trust and communication must be increased. (Mash, p. 288).

Flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs must become reality for survival of the educational system. New types of students both part-time and full-time need new types of services. (Hine, Patterson, Bowers and Hozyland, p. 112).

## Procedures

To ascertain what policies currently exist in Pennsylvania Community Colleges and our neighboring colleges, a survey has been made of these institutions. A questionnaire (attached) was sent to the Dean of Students or related official since it was deemed likely these individuals would have the information needed and may also have an interest in seeing the results of such a survey. The results are tabulated and presented. Written replies are summarized and presented.

## Limitations

There is one very important limitation reflected in the results. Many of the replies may be the opinion of the person who filled out the questionnaire. They

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would not be the only possible response to illustrate the situation of the students in these areas.

Results

The results of the survey do not provide clear testimony regarding existing programs for part-time students, nor do they provide clear information on the participation of part-time students in College Governance.

Thirty-two questionnaires were sent to community and junior colleges in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The questionnaires were directed to Deans of Students or those with job classifications most closely related to that position; such as Vice President of Student Affairs, Dean of Student Activities, Director of Student Life.

Twenty-two completed questionnaires were returned giving an average of 68.75 percent return on this instrument. It was discovered at a later date that another cluster member with a different practicum focus had requested much of the same information on a questionnaire to many of the same institutions. This might be a reason for the ten unreturned questionnaires.

The institutions contacted were located in both

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urban and suburban settings. The urban institutions were located near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Trenton, New Jersey, and New York, New York.

Of the twenty-two colleges responding, twenty-one identified full-time students as those enrolled for twelve or more semester hours and part-time students as those enrolled for eleven or less semester hours. One college identified full-time students as those enrolled for eight or more semester hours and part-time as seven or less semester hours.

In question number four, asking who is eligible to vote for Student Government officers, twenty-two of twenty-two colleges replied full-time students can vote but only seventeen of twenty-two replied part-time students could vote for Student Government officers. Eleven institutions indicated that evening students could not vote and two schools indicated evening students could vote if they were full-time students. These results indicate that there is a disenfranchisement of some part-time students and many evening students.

In question number five, asking for requirements to hold Student Government office, ten institutions indicated students must be full time, three indicated

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students must be day students, twelve schools indicated a cumulative average of "C" or better to be eligible to hold office. There was also a scattering of requirements such as a range of cumulative average of 2.5 - 1.75 on a four-point scale, not on probation and other schools indicated that part-time students have a representative elected to Student Government Association.

In question number six, asking are such students on institutional committees, all institutions reported that students did sit as votary members of various institutional committees. Many of these institutional committees are not of a governance nature. They include committees of an advisory nature.

Thirteen of the sixteen responses to item seven indicated students are appointed to these institutional committees rather than elected. In eleven cases these appointments were made by the Student Government Association or its President. In three cases the appointments were made by the College President. A single case showed appointment made by a committee of faculty, students, and College Senate, and one case showed appointments by the Vice President of Student Services. In two cases, students were elected by the Student Government and in two cases by the Faculty Senate.

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Two institutions reported that students sit on the Board of Trustees but only in one case can the student vote. A student is allowed as a visitor in one case. In seventeen reported cases there is no student representation or involvement on the College Board of Trustees.

It was found that twelve institutions had an all college senate in which major segments of the school population were represented (administrators, faculty, and students). Nine reported a Faculty Senate, eighteen reported a Student Government Association (students only), and twelve indicated a Faculty Union (labor, collective bargaining).

In four out of twenty-two institutions responding to question twelve, it was indicated that there is a separate organization for evening students. This strongly indicates a void in the governance process of this area of student population. On question twelve sixteen out of twenty-two indicated that evening and part-time students do have input into the college governance system through their existing representative bodies. Sixteen colleges responded that they do have specific programs for evening students. These are mostly for academic and counseling purposes. Eleven schools indicated a program in social, recreation, and cultural areas. Seven schools reported

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vocational and career programs for evening and part-time students. Two schools indicated that all programs are open to all students, which could be true at most institutions.

Although not generally in the college governance area of particular interest was the question of who determined the need for programs for evening and part-time students (question number fourteen).

Ten schools indicated faculty.

Thirteen schools indicated students.

Thirteen schools indicated counselors.

Fifteen schools indicated administrators.

One school indicated divisional council.

It could generally be shown that if programs do exist their inception could come from almost any area of the college.

The responses to question number fifteen, who determines the success of these programs (as asked in question number fourteen), there seems to be mixed responsibility. The largest group taking responsibility is the administrators.

Communication to evening and part-time students is done in traditional ways by all responding institutions. The most interesting idea reported by two

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schools was a closed circuit television with monitors in appropriate places to afford students up-to-date data about almost anything of importance to the students. There was no agreement among the responses as to which method of communication was best. Two commented that all methods of communication used to-date were equally inappropriate to elicit responses.

Replying to special problems not covered by the questionnaire, some of the responses as related to evening and part-time students were:

1. Lack of proper lighting in parking lots and walkways for evening students. Since almost all of the community colleges are commuter schools, this is a very real problem for the safety of the students, not only for attendance to classes, but also to make the college more attractive for students to use as a community gathering area and for social events.

2. The need for expanding student services such as, financial aid, records office, advising and career choice. Part-time students are often beginning a new direction in their lives and could profit from additional guidance.

3. College committees working on evening student development.

4. Because students commute to class and leave

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campus when classes are over, it is difficult to obtain input and get feedback regarding student needs.

5. Communication to night students are difficult because of number four.

6. There seems to be some difficulties in obtaining a degree at night since all curriculum requirements are offered in the evening.

Recommendations

Delaware County Community College should facilitate better communication and greater participation in College Governance by the following means, in order to provide for the increasing needs of part-time and evening students.

1. Institutional committees involved with College Governance should have student representation from all segments of the student body.

2. College Governance Committees should schedule meeting times that rotate between days and vary as to hour in order to allow the opportunity for all segments of the student population to attend and participate in these representative committees.

3. An All-College Senate or representative body should be established to improve and better facilitate communications and input into the College Governance

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process from all segments of the institutions population.

4. Student Government Association at Delaware County Community College should change its constitution to provide for the special needs of part-time and evening students.

5. The establishment of an organization within Student Government Association for and by evening students that would only be involved with their special needs. The thrust of this organization would be to be organized with a very flexible structure to be better able to cope with different schedules of the evening and part-time students. This organization could then have representative input into, not only Student Government Association, of which it is a part, but may also be allowed representation in the larger institutional Governance Committee.

Further Recommendations not generally involved with governance.

1. To provide for fast communications that would be up-dated hourly Delaware County Community College should provide for closed circuit television with monitors placed at strategic locations to afford all college personnel and students the opportunity to be kept abreast of all information. Delaware County Community College has this equipment and could, with

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very small expense impliment this proposal almost immediately.

2. Course scheduling for evening students shows a need to be carefully monitored in order that evening and part-time students will meet the institutional requirements to complete their programs. It is also recommended that all curricula with features that could only be accomplished during the school day hours needs to be carefully checked. Students must be informed about these special situations and helped to organize their programs. Faculty advisors in all curricula areas should be made available in the P.M.

3. It is further recommended that the college take heed and make a great effort to provide for input from evening and part-time students and show good faith by being responsive to the realistic needs of these students and their special problems.

CONCLUSION

This study has showed that Delaware County Community College is not unique in its approach to communication and representation of part-time students. These students are not included in the governance or committee system in their special capacity. Separate plans for their participation and needs are minimal.

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Faculty and students should be included for increased communication and formulation of consensus on issues of importance to part-time students. Administrators should attempt to find a system of maximum input and yet remain accountable in decision-making. (Mash, p. 290). There should be recognition of various groups of students and their different needs. The educational environment should attempt to respond to these needs as they apply to the total educational development of the student. (Kerr, p. 40). In order to respond adequately to the challenge of the needs of part-time students, Delaware County Community College should embark on a comprehensive survey of participation, interests, and needs of these students.

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GRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Sir:

We are attempting to obtain information about student involvement in College Governance

This questionnaire is designed to help us learn the characteristics of other institutions.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would please take a few minutes to help us by filling out this questionnaire

Thank you.

1. Name of Institution _____

2. Location of Institution _____

3. Please give your institution's definition of the following

Evening students: _____

_____

_____

Part-time students: _____

_____

_____

Full-time students: _____

_____

_____

4. Who is eligible to vote for student Government Offices (elections)

Full time student Yes_____ No_____

Part time student Yes_____ No_____

Evening Yes_____ No_____

Other _____

_____

5. What are the requirements for holding a student government office?

Full time student Yes_____ No_____

Day student Yes_____ No_____

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"C" or passing average Yes_____ No_____

Other Criteria_____

_____

6. Are students on institutional committees?

Yes_____ No_____

If Yes, what type of committees?

| | VOTE | NO VOTE |
|---|---|---|
| _____Academic policy | ____ | _____ |
| _____Academic Standard | ____ | _____ |
| _____Curriculum planning | ____ | _____ |
| _____Faculty Evaluation | ____ | _____ |
| _____Faculty Hiring | ____ | _____ |
| _____Student admission & retention | ____ | _____ |
| _____Student affairs | ____ | _____ |
| _____Judicial (for students) | ____ | _____ |
| _____Advisory Committee to President | ____ | _____ |
| _____Athletic committees | ____ | _____ |

_____Other, please specify _____

_____

7. How are students selected for these committees?

Appointed _____

Elected _____

If appointed, who appoints? _____

If elected, what body elects? _____

8. Are students appointed to the Board of Trustees?

Yes _____ No_____

If Yes, can they vote? Yes_____ No_____

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9. What representative bodies are involved in the Governance of your College?

Please check those that apply:

_____All College Senate (all segments represented)

_____Faculty Senate (Faculty only)

_____Student Government (Students only)

_____Faculty Union (Labor, Collective Bargaining)

_____Other (please explain) _____

_____

10. Are there any representative bodies on which students may sit but not vote?

Yes_____ No_____

11. Is there a separate ogranization (committee) for Evening Students?

Yes_____ No_____

12. Do evening students and part-time students have "in-put" into the "College Governance System" through representative bodies?

Yes _____ No _____

If Yes, please explain and include what bodies _____

_____

13. Are there specific programs designed for evening and part-time students?

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, are they

Academic _____

Social, Recreation and Culture _____

Vocational _____

Counseling _____

Other _____(please explain)_____

_____

14. Who determines the need for the programs cited above (13) for evening and part-time students?

Faculty _____

Students _____

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Counselors _____

Administrators _____

Other _____ (Please explain) _____

_____

15. Who has the responsibility to determine the success of the programs for Evening and Part-time students?

Faculty _____

Students _____

Counselors _____

Administrators _____

Other _____ (Please explain)_____

_____

16. What methods of communication are used to inform part-time and evening students of college events, institutional policies, important calendar dates, etc.

| | Day | Evening | Part-time |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily announcement sheets | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| College newspaper | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Mail | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Phone | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| College catalog | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Loud Speaker System | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Class announcements | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Bulletin Boards | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Other | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Please state which method you feel is best_____

_____

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17. Are you currently aware, or have you been made aware of any special or particular problem or concerns specific to part-time and/or evening students?

If Yes, please specify_____

_____

If you would like to have the results of our survey and recommendations, please include your

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Thank you for your help.

Ross Ann Craig

David M. Heiney

Conrad E. Chalick

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
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